

Irven. Finally, at the time that both the present application and the '562 application were copending, they were assigned to the same assignee, Air Products and Chemicals, Inc. ("Air Products"). The application has therefore been amended to identify it as a continuation-in-part of the '562 application.

Applicants are filing herewith an *unexecuted* supplemental declaration containing the above priority claim. Because some of the inventors reside outside of the United States, an executed declaration could not be submitted concurrently with this claim for priority. Applicants are in the process of having each of the inventors execute the supplemental declaration and will submit, under separate cover, the *executed* declaration once all of the inventor signatures are obtained.

Remarks

Claims 1-39 are pending in the above-identified application. Claims 1-39 were rejected in a first Office Action dated October 4, 2001.

Claims 1-39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Zheng et al. Applicants assume that the Examiner, when referring to "Zheng et al." without specific citation to either an application or patent number, is referring to European Patent Application EP 0 916 891 A2.

EP 0 916 891 A2 is the European counterpart to the '562 application, to which applicants now claim priority. EP 0 916 891 A2 identifies the same inventors as the '562 application – Dao-Hong Zheng, John Irven and Mark A. George – and Air Products is identified as the applicant. EP 0 916 891 A2

contains the same specification as does the '562 application. In addition, EP 0 916 891 A2 claims priority to GB 9724168, the same Great Britain application to which the '562 application claims priority.

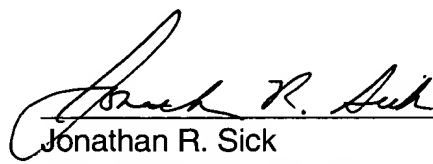
In light of applicants' claim for priority benefit under 35 U.S.C. § 120, applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claims 1-39 over EP 0 916 891 A2, the European counterpart to the '562 application to which applicants now claim priority.

Examiner Walton is invited to telephone applicants' undersigned attorney at 312.775.8196 if any unresolved matters remain.

No fee is believed necessary for this filing. If any additional fees may be required, the Commissioner is authorized to charge any such additional fees to Deposit Account No. 13-0017.

Dated: March 4, 2002

Respectfully submitted,


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**37 C.F.R. § 1.121 ATTACHMENT SEPARATE FROM THE AMENDMENT
WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE**

The section of the specification entitled "Cross-Reference to Related Applications" has been amended as follows (deletions bracketed, insertions underlined):

[Not applicable.]

This application is a continuation-in-part of and claims the benefit of U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/189,562 filed on November 11, 1998, now Patent No. 6,314,986 B1, issued on November 13, 2001, which claims priority to GB 9724168, filed on November 14, 1997.